

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present reply is responsive to the final Office Action mailed February 27, 2006. Claims 1, 4, 11, 12, 17 and 18 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Support for the amendments may be found, by way of example only, in specification paragraphs 0109-0116 and FIGS. 13-19. Claims 7-10 were previously cancelled. Therefore, claims 1-6 and 11-18 are again presented for the Examiner's consideration in view of the following comments. A petition for a two (2) month extension of time is submitted herewith.

Reexamination and reconsideration of the above-identified application, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, and in light of the remarks that follow, are respectfully requested. Because the present claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the cited art, good cause exists for the entry of this reply in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

As an initial matter, the undersigned would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview held on May 17, 2006 regarding the pending claims. It is believed that the interview has helped advance prosecution in the case.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 11-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,635,978 ("Alten") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,442,390 ("Hooper"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

As discussed in responses to earlier Office Actions, Alten is directed to an electronic program scheduling system "that provides the viewer with a more versatile, readable, and aesthetically pleasing display of program listings as well as promotional information." (Col.1 ll.8-12.) The system includes "head end" cable system equipment 10 and a master uplink installation 100. (See FIG. 1.)

The master uplink installation 100 compiles television program schedules and promotional data. (See col.5 ll.31-32.) Within the master uplink installation, "[d]ata processor 110 processes the various data including the program schedule listings stored in database 120, channel map data stored in database 130, and the promotional information stored in database 140. Text fit data processor 115 provides a computer system for editing the program schedule listings descriptions so that they may fit in different size display cells, and is described later." (Col.5 ll.32-39.)

The listings database 120 of the master uplink installation 100 "contains the program listings for all cable networks, local stations (including their affiliated network programs), in addition to pay-per-view events." (Col.5 ll.39-42.) The master uplink installation 100 generates television program schedule information and promotional material to the cable head-end 10 (see col.5 ll.21-23). Furthermore, "Updates and changes to the program schedule information are made at the master uplink facility and then transmitted to the participant cable system." (Col.6 ll.58-60.)

Once the program schedule information is configured by the master uplink installation 100 and distributed to the cable head end equipment 10, the information can be distributed to an interactive cable converter box 200. (See col.14 ll.5-15.) According to Alten, the "length of the program determines the size of the cell available for the display of the program title and other information." (Col.8 ll.61-63.) The text fit system determines how to generate a program table to display program titles based on the number of characters in the title and the grid cell size.

As stated in the Office Action on page 4, "Alten merely discloses the regular start and end times," which is not what is claimed. For instance, claim 1 requires relative start

and end times within a selected time slot. In order to overcome the deficiencies of *Alten*, the Office Action relies on *Hooper*.

*Hooper* teaches a video on demand system with specialized caches on the transmission side (server cache 24) and the receiver side (customer segment cache 14) as shown in FIGS. 2 and 8. These caches enable the system to stream video data to one or more customers. The customer(s) may start segments of the video at given time intervals. (See col.10 ll.15-26.) In one example, segments of a movie are started at multiples of five minutes. Due to this, "a customer has, at the most, to wait only five minutes to start viewing the selected video." (Col.10 ll.27-28.)

Applicant understands from the telephone interview that it is the Examiner's position that because *Hooper* allows a program to be shown at different times, it is applicable to the "relative start time" and "relative end time" features of the claims. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The segmented video streams of *Hooper* are not part of broadcast signals multiplexed with program guide information. Furthermore, the video streams of *Hooper* are not associated with program time slots wherein programs are allocated with reference to relative start and end times within a selected time slot. There is also no indication in *Hooper* of the relative start time or the relative end time for a given program being different than the predetermined start and end times for a given time slot.

In rejecting claims 17 and 18, the Office Action took Official Notice "that at the time the invention was made, it was well known in the art to organize an EPGF according to genre or category. It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art a[t] the time the invention was made, to modify *Alten* to organize the EPG according to genre or theme at least for the improvement of more easily enabling the user to find the type of program desired to be viewed." (Office Action pg.5.)

This was the sole reason for rejecting claims 17-18. However, claim 17 also included the feature of "generating a program table for display to a user based on the retrieval table," and claim 18 also included the feature of "generating a program table for display to a user based on the clone program guide objects of the retrieval table." These recited limitations were not addressed in the rejection.

Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to include the recited feature of claim 17 and claims 11 and 12 have been amended to include the recited feature of claim 18. Specifically, claim 1 now includes "means for generating a program table for display to a user based on the retrieval table." Claim 4 now includes "generating a program table for display to a user based on the retrieval table." Claim 11 now includes "means for generating a program table for display to a user based on the clone program guide objects of the retrieval table." And claim 12 now includes "generating a program table for display to a user based on the clone program guide objects of the retrieval table."

The specification describes how a program table is generated based on a retrieval table, and is then displayed to the user. For instance, paragraphs 0107-0109 state:

[0107] As described above, when a command to display a program table is input from the control manager, the main manager requests the EPG manager to produce a program table. On receiving this request, the EPG manager retrieves a retrieval table produced as described above, and retrieves a program to be displayed on the program table. Fig. 19 shows an example of retrieval processing carried out by the EPG manager.

[0108] First, at step S31, the EPG manager sets the hour Hp of the hour, minute and second of the present time to a time slot Hs to be retrieved. Then, the processing goes to step S32 to set the genre to be retrieved. That is, the EPG manager produces and prepares the retrieval table as shown in Fig. 18 for each genre. At step S32, the genre of the retrieval

table to be used from among the retrieval tables is set. If any of the genre selection buttons 102 on the remote controller 7 is operated to designate a predetermined genre, that genre is set.

[0109] Then, the processing goes to step S33, and the EPG manager retrieves a clone EPG object of the time slot Hs from the retrieval table of the genre set at step S32. Then, at step S34, processing to display the retrieved clone EPG object is carried out. Specifically, the EPG manager reads out the program logo of the retrieved clone EPG object and transfers the program logo to the main manager. At this point, data of the contents of one program, that is, a program on which the cursor 132 is located in the example of Fig. 13, and data of an advertisement are read out from the clone EPG object and transferred to the main manager. The main manager transfers, to the display manager, the data transferred from the EPG manager, and requests the display manager to display the data. In response to this request, the display manager produces display data. The display manager then outputs the produced display data to the monitor 5 through the module manager, and causes the monitor 5 to display the display data. Thus, a program table as shown in Fig. 13 is displayed on the monitor 5.

Neither *Alten* nor *Hooper*, either alone or in combination, teaches or suggests each and every limitation of the independent claims. For instance, with regard to claims 1 and 4, neither reference provides for producing a retrieval table based on program guide information and generating a program table for display to a user based on the retrieval table. With regard to claims 11 and 12, neither reference provides for setting relative start and end times of the selected programs in at least one timeslot, for generating clone program guide objects from the program guide objects, and for allocating the clone program guide objects on the retrieval table with reference to the at least one timeslot, and for generating a program table for display to a user based on the clone program guide objects of the retrieval table.

For at least these reasons, applicant respectfully

submits that the rejection of independent claims 1, 4, 11 and 12 should be withdrawn. Claims 3, 6, and 13-18 depend from the independent claims and contain all of the limitations thereof as well as other limitations that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record. Accordingly, applicant submits that these dependent claims are likewise patentable.

Claims 2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Alten* and *Hooper* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,812,124 ("*Eick*"). *Eick* does not overcome the deficiencies of *Alten* and *Hooper* with respect to the independent claims. Claims 2 and 5 depend from claims 1 and 4, respectively, and contain all of the limitations thereof as well as other limitations that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record. Accordingly, applicant submits that these dependent claims are likewise patentable.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

Application No.: 09/284,698

Docket No.: SONYAK 3.3-033

If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have. If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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